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SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [CVIS](#) [KFRD](#) [KREC](#) [PGOV](#) [KG](#)

SUBJECT: CONTINUED KYRGYZ VIOLATIONS OF VISA RECIPROCITY

REF: A) Chittenden-Visa Office E-mails May 2009
B) 08 Bishkek 654
C) 07 Bishkek 1328

¶1. (SBU) Summary: In May 2009, post learned that the Kyrgyz government increased the cost of all visas issued to foreigners, resulting in U.S. citizens paying approximately \$270 for a one-year, multiple entry Kyrgyz visa, which is now only available in country. At a May 22 meeting with the Consular Department of the Kyrgyz Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Embassy was informed that foreigners may only receive single-entry visas, valid for one month, from Kyrgyz Embassies and Consulates abroad. These changes violate existing visa reciprocity between the U.S. and the Kyrgyz Republic. Post is sending a diplomatic note to protest this violation and to inform the Government of Kyrgyzstan (GOKG) that the U.S. will take steps to lower its visa reciprocity for Kyrgyz citizens. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) For the second consecutive year, the GOKG has violated visa reciprocity with the U.S. As reported in refs B and C, U.S. citizens have experienced increasing difficulties in obtaining Kyrgyz visas. The Embassy has raised this issue several times at various levels of the Kyrgyz government. Visa policy seems to follow a vicious, counter-productive cycle. Each time it appears that a solution or compromise has been reached, new measures or regulations are implemented by the Kyrgyz with no notice to the diplomatic community.

¶3. (SBU) At a May 22 meeting with Mirgazy Iskaov, the head of the Kyrgyz Consular Department, the Embassy was informed that Kyrgyz Embassies abroad will again cease issuing one-year, multiple-entry visas. Foreigners now may only receive a single-entry visa valid for one month when applying abroad or at the Manas International Airport, and then they must apply to change their visa category once in Kyrgyzstan.

¶4. (SBU) The Kyrgyz government has also changes the fee schedule for visas. U.S. citizens will pay \$190 to receive a multiple-their visa, which is in addition to the \$80 cost for a single-entry visa issued at the airport. Under Kyrgyz law, foreigners must be in a possession of their passports at all times. Therefore, the majority of U.S. citizens pay an additional \$200 fee to expedite the in-country processing for the multiple-entry visa (so as to avoid difficulties and fines from the local police).

¶5. (SBU) Post is sending a diplomatic note to protest these violations of visa reciprocity. If the GOKG does not change its visa issuance policies, post will request that the Department immediately reduce the reciprocity of non-immigrant visas issued to Kyrgyz citizens.

GFOELLER